

IN THE CLAIMS:

For the convenience of the Examiner, all pending claims of the present application are shown below in clean form whether or not an amendment has been made. Please refer to the attached sheet showing a mark-up version of the amendments to the claims.

Please cancel claims 15, 17 and 20.

1. (amended) A method of preparing a description of an item for an online auction, said method comprising:

receiving a unique code corresponding to the item at a first computer system;
retrieving one or more characteristics corresponding to the unique code from a data storage area; and
transmitting the one or more characteristics to a requestor,
wherein the unique code is a manufacturer-supplied code and the one or more characteristics retrieved from the data storage area are specified by the manufacturer.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the item is a computer system.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
connecting the first computer system to a computer network;
wherein the requestor includes a second computer system, the second computer system being connected to the computer network; and
wherein the transmitting includes sending data across the computer network to the second computer system.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving the one or more characteristics at a second computer system; and
sending the one or more characteristics from the second computer system to an online auction site.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising:
displaying the one or more characteristics on a display screen connected to the second computer system; and

modifying the one or more characteristics using an input device connected to the second computer system.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
receiving the one or more characteristics at a second computer system;
executing a configuration utility on the second computer system, the configuration utility programmed to determine the configuration of the second computer system; and
updating the one or more characteristics corresponding to the configuration.

7. The method of claim 6 further comprising:
sending the configuration from the second computer system to the first computer system;
receiving the configuration at the first computer system; and
updating the one or more characteristics stored in the data storage area based on the configuration.

8.(amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
determining one or more compatible subparts for the item; and
transmitting one or more characteristics of the one or more compatible subparts to the requestor.

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9.(amended) A method of preparing a description of a computer system for an online auction, said method comprising:
executing a configuration utility on a first computer system, the configuration utility programmed to determine one or more characteristics of the first computer system; and
transmitting the one or more characteristics to a second computer system.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the second computer system is an online auction computer system and wherein the transmitting is over a computer network connecting the first computer system to the online auction computer system.

11. The method of claim 9 further comprising:
storing the one or more characteristics in a data storage area accessible from
the second computer system.
12. The method of claim 9 further comprising:
displaying the one or more characteristics on a display screen connected to the
first computer system; and
modifying the one or more characteristics using an input device connected to
the first computer system.

13.(amended) A method of upgrading a computer system, said method
comprising:
receiving a configuration list of one or more items in the computer system;
determining a list of one or more components, the one or more components
compatible with one or more items in the computer system;
selecting a new component from the one or more components; and
ordering the new component.

14.(amended) The method of claim 13 further comprising:
accessing a computer network, the computer network connected to a merchant
computer;
obtaining a price corresponding to the one ore more components from the
merchant computer;
displaying the price on the display screen;
wherein the ordering includes sending the merchant a purchase request for the
new component.

16-(amended) The method of claim 13 wherein the receiving includes:
accessing a computer network, the computer network connected to the
computer system and to a second computer system;
sending a unique code corresponding to the computer system from the
computer system to the second computer system over the computer network; and

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receiving at the computer system the configuration list of items sent from the second computer system. B

18.(amended) The method of claim 13 wherein the receiving includes:
executing a configuration utility on the computer system, the configuration utility programmed to determine the configuration list of one or more items; and
storing the configuration list of one or more items in a memory accessible by the computer system.

19.(amended) A method of purchasing a new computer system, said method comprising:
executing a configuration utility in an old computer system resulting in an old computer configuration;
receiving new computer configuration corresponding to the new computer system;
comparing the old computer configuration with the new computer configuration resulting in one or more re-usable components; and
ordering the new computer system without one or more re-usable components.

21.(amended) The method of claim 19 further comprising:
acquiring a street price corresponding to the old computer configured without the one or more re-usable components;
obtaining a new computer price corresponding to the new computer configured without the one or more re-usable components; and
calculating a transaction price by subtracting the street price from the new computer price.

22.(amended) The method of claim 19 further comprising:
transmitting the old computer configuration to an online auction computer, wherein the online auction computer is connected to a computer network, the computer network connecting the online auction site computer to a first computer.

23. A computer system comprising:
a processor;
a nonvolatile memory coupled to the processor;
a communications port connecting the computer system to a computer network;
a computer program stored in the nonvolatile memory and executed by the processor, wherein the computer program operates to:
send a unique code to a second computer system, the second computer system being connected to the computer network;
receive configuration data corresponding to the unique code from the second computer system; and
transmit an auction description to a auction computer, the auction description including the configuration data and the auction computer being connected to the computer network.

24.(amended) The computer system of claim 23 wherein the computer program further operates to:
access a merchant computer system, the merchant computer system connected to the computer network;
select a new computer system available from the merchant computer system;
receive new configuration data corresponding to the new computer system;
compare the new configuration data with the configuration data, resulting in identification of one or more compatible components.